

PRESS RELEASE

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Mary Jo Juarez, Naval Facilities Engineering Command NW
Silverdale, Washington
Named SBA Veteran Small Business Champion of the Year
Celebration honoring winners on April 29th - Marion Oliver McCaw Hall, Seattle Center

SEATTLE – The U.S. Small Business Administration's Seattle District Office has named **Mary Jo Juarez, Naval Facilities Engineering Command (NAVFAC) NW** as the **2008 Washington State SBA Veteran Small Business Champion of the Year**. The Veteran Small Business Champion award goes to an individual who shows a commitment to advancing small business opportunities for veterans of the U.S. armed forces. The winner for the state of Washington fits the bill. Mary Jo Juarez is a civilian who works as a Small Disadvantaged Business Utilization Specialist at NAVFAC in Silverdale. She has gone the extra mile to step up identification of veteran-owned small businesses, helping them expand the markets for their products or services into public and private contracting sectors.

Juarez works closely with the SBA, the Northwest Minority Business Council, and the Office of Minority and Women Business Enterprises in assisting the Navy in meeting their goal of utilizing veteran-owned small businesses. Juarez networks constantly with other agencies and large firms to provide them with information on local small veteran-owned businesses available for sub-contracting purposes. Juarez meets with and directly mentors veterans to guide them on steps for contracting success with NAVFAC, with 11 billion dollars worth of opportunities annually. NAVFAC contracts range in size from \$100,000 to multi-millions for facilities engineering solutions on behalf of the Navy, Marine Corps and other federal clients worldwide. Veteran-owned businesses can compete for NAVFAC contracts to provide construction services, architect and engineering services, environmental remediation and compliance, base maintenance services, and facilities management in support of base security, supply, port operations, bachelor quarters, and family housing.

Juarez has spearheaded numerous tradeshows, matchmaking events, and contractor training seminars targeting veteran-owned businesses. She trains veterans on how to submit sound bids to Federal agencies and provides ample tips that help them network more effectively with prime contractors. Juarez invites veteran-owned businesses to classes offered by NAVFAC about pricing, overhead and audit issues; about Davis-Bacon wages and other labor-related issues; about marketing to and contracting with the Navy; and about how to enhance success with the source selection process. New classes on safety are under development.

Juarez established Small Business Presentation Days with the SBA and now provides extra encouragement for veterans to participate and present their companies, products and services to NAVFAC. Her expansion efforts substantially increased the opportunities for veteran-owned business to obtain contracts or subcontracts when 21 other agencies and prime contractors joined NAVFAC's program.

Juarez also coordinated a Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Business conference to give veterans additional exposure for one-on-one matchmaking with the federal, state, and local agencies and prime contractors. Recently she has coordinated the acquisition of special contract opportunities for Service-Disabled Veteran-owned Small Businesses as well as HUBZone businesses.

Coordinating efforts both on and off the job, Juarez has done much to enhance opportunities for veteran contractors. Her tireless efforts to make a difference for our country's veterans are why she is SBA's 2008 Veteran Business Champion for the state of Washington.

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